

EMILE ZOLA, NOVELIST AND
REFORMER 183

conscious of the difference "between the rich
and the poor.
His descent into the mire of life, to seek
there his Cou-
peau, his Lantier, and his Gervaise, left on his
mind some
impress of the horror which he imparted to
others. And
thus, with him, art no longer remained art for
art's sake
only, — a broad humanitarianism gradually
entered into his
literary conceptions.

At the outset the novelist and the reformer
were cer-
tainly more or less at variance. The *cuisine* of
politics still
remained distasteful to Zola, and he is often
found protest-
ing that he is merely a literary man and does
not wish to
intervene in passing events. But as the years
elapse the
reforming instinct becomes more and more
powerful, gathers
increased strength from *such*, works as "
Germinal" and
"La Terre," till at last the humanitarian
feeling, triumph-
ing over everything else, trampling
unrestrained upon all
literary canons, finds voice in "Lourdes"
and "Paris,"
"Edcondite" and "Travail," and at a supreme
moment
impels Zola to champion the chosen victim of
Roman
Catholic fanaticism and military infallibility.

At an early stage of his gradual
transformation he is seen
denning the novelist as an exponent, an
analyst, a dissector
of human life. His work is to be accomplished
in strict
accordance with science, and the methods of

the great
scientist, Claude Bernard, are] held up to him
as examples.
This idea of "le Roman Experimental," as
Zola finally
called the scientific fiction he expounded, had
long haunted
him; but when he wished to give it really
adequate ex-
pression he was momentarily at a loss as to
where he might
find the most forcible and most modern
exposition of scien-
tific principles and methods. It was his
friend M. Yves